cent and within South Asia, India has a poverty rate at 52 per cent. The basis of poverty line adopted in the ADB study is Purchasing Power Parity adjusted $1 a day which is quite different form the criteria followed in India.

(c) There is a three-pronged attack on poverty, i.e., (i) acceleration of economic growth, (ii) human and social development through literacy, education, health, nutrition, meeting the minimum needs, elevation of social and economic status of the weaker sections of the society, etc., and (iii) direct attack on poverty through employment and income generating programmes and asset-building for the poor. The main among these programmes are the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), Prime Minister's Integerated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUPEP) and Urban Basic Services for Poor (UBSP). A basic Minimum Services programme was launhced last year. A scheme: Million wells Scheme (MWS) and Swarna Jayanthi Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) will be implemented from 1st December, 1997 which will phase out NRY, PMIUPEP and UBSP.

The self-employment and supplementary wage employment programmes would not only continue in the Ninth Plan, but also would be redesigned in order to make them more effective instruments of poverty alleviation. They would also be integrated with the various sectoral programmes as well as the area development programmes within the umbrella of the Panchayati Raj institutions.

MPLAD Scheme in Kerala

*25. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether many irregularities of mismanagement of funds in Kerala under the M.Ps' Local Area Development Scheme have come to Government's notice, as reported in the Pioneer dated 13th March, 1997;

(b) if so, whether Government have been able to pinpoint the persons responsible in each case:

(c) what steps Government have taken in plug the loopholes in the working of the scheme; and

(d) the incidents of such mismanagement of MPLAD funds reported by M.Ps in other States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI RATNAMALA DEHARESHWAR SAVANOOR): (a) and (b) A complaint was received about frequently changing the accounts for keeping MPLADS funds, resulting into loss of interest. Report received from District Authorities reveals that the Bank Authorities have allowed interest for the period of FDs when it was broken prematurely. They have also allowed interest for the period when the amount was kept in current accounts.

(c) Instructions have been issued to the District Heads to open separat Personal Ledger Account for each Member of Parliament and to account for interest occurred on year to year basis.

(d) No such other instance has been brought to the notice of this Department.

Complaints against Haj Committee

*26. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are keen to bring changes in the Haj Act, if so by when Government are going to introduce a Bill in this regard;

(b) whether Government have received complaints against the present Haj Committee, if so, what is the nature of complaints;

(c) what action has been initiated by Government in this regard; and

(d) whether Government would order an enquiry into the complaints?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERWANI): (a) The Government is actively considering a replacement for the existing Haj Committee Act of 1959 and is working on the draft Bill for being

introduced in the Parliament at the earliest.

(b) The Government has received several complaints against the Haj Committee. These complaints were in the nature of delay in refunds due to the pilgrims, unsatisfactory accommodation and transport in Makkah, number of times the Members of Haj Committee travelled to Saudi Arabia and allowances drawn by them, misuse of free air tickets received from the Airlines and the mismanagement of Haj Committee funds.

(c) and (d) The complaints have been looked into the appropriate action has been taken, whenever necessary.

Disposal of Toxic Wastes

*27. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of hospitals and nursing homes in Delhi;

(b) whether there is any law requiring them to destroy the toxic wastes and other infected material which they are turning out in large quantity every day; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to initiate any action in this direction in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) There are 86 hospitals and 201 registered nursing homes in Delhi.

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Environment & Forests have notified on 24.4.1995, the Draft Bio-medical Waste (Management & Handling) Rules 1995 which have again been notified on 16.10.1997 as Draft Rules for obtaining objections or suggestions from the public. 60 days time has been allowed for filing of objections or suggestions from the public, from the date of notification. These Draft rules shall be applicable to hospitals, nursing homes, veterinary institutions, animal houses or slaughter houses, clinics, dispensaries, laboratories providing treatment to not less than 1000 patients per month. According to these rules the Bio-medical wastes are to be handled as per the prescribed procedures which specify responsibility for handling Bio-medical waste, its segregation, packing, transportation, storage, treatment, disposal maintenance of records, accident reporting and export-import methods for Bio-medical wastes. The rules also specify the responsibility of Bio-medical waste generators and operators.

The Central Pollution Control Board has also developed Environmental Standards and guidelines for management of hospital waste.

Departmental Examination for Section Officers/Senior P.As

*28. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Union Public Service Commission had conducted Section Officers/Senior P.As Departmental Examination in December, 1996;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Commission has not declared the result of the written part of that examination, so far;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Commission is going to conduct another examination in December, 1997;

(e) whether it is necessary to declare final result of the 1996 examination before conducting the 1997 examination; and

(f) if so, what steps are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It has become necessary to examine the applicability of the instructions issued by the Government vide Department of Personnel & Training O.M. No. 36012/23/96-Estt. (Res.) dated 22.7.97 on the basis of the judgement of the Supreme Court of India in the case of S. Vinod Kumar Vs Union of India (JT) 1996 (8) SC (6431) before the result of the Section Officers/Senior P.A. Departmental Examination,